



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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## A Time of Transitions

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

### Sheriff Liedle Resigns from IM Project Directors

On Jan. 22, Sheriff Cheryl Liedle resigned from her long-time tenure as Chair of the Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD). The IM Project has benefited from her stewardship, and she will be sorely missed.

Sheriff Liedle was able to leverage the lessons learned and experience gained from the Lewis and Clark County's interoperability project—the first one in the state—as she led the IM Project to success in the rest of the state. Montana was lucky to have her in this leadership capacity.

### Tom Olsen Transfers to New Position

Tom Olsen, Northrop Grumman, recently applied for and received a new position within Northrop Grumman that he will be starting the beginning of February. At the last IMPD meeting, Tom Olsen was thanked for all his contributions to the IM Project, and he received a round of applause. We wish him the very best in his new position.

### Billings Fire Chief Marv Jochems Retires

At the end of Dec., 2007, Billings Fire Chief Marv Jochems retired from a 35-year-long career with the Billings Fire Department. He rose through the ranks from Captain to Battalion Chief to Assistant Chief. After earning a degree in business management, Marv became Fire Chief in May 2000.

Marv has been a leader in countywide emergency preparedness. He recently helped draft a city-county agreement on radio interoperability that allows the county and City of Billings to work toward a cost-effective and efficient interoperable communications system for the purpose of public safety.

According to Jim Reno, Yellowstone County Commissioner, "Without Marv's professional standing, I'm not sure the joint resolution would have happened. He knows what is right for our public safety workers."

All of us at PSSB wish Marv the very best in his future endeavors.

## Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium Meeting

By Pete Mohan [pmohan@mt.gov](mailto:pmohan@mt.gov)

The Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium (EITC) board met at the Dawson County Law

Enforcement Center, on Wed., Jan. 23 at 10:00 am. Project Director Chief of Police Alan Michaels reviewed consortium minutes and presented a review of the last Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD), Interoperability Montana Technical Committee (IMTC), and Interoperability Montana Governance Committee (IMGC) meetings. Chief Michaels thanked members for their prompt gathering of information to participate in the upcoming fire grants.

Mid-Rivers Communications addressed the group regarding the planned placement of cell towers by the communications company. Chief Michaels pointed out benefits of having approved leases, easements to the lease sites, and site users agreements signed to take advantage of the build out that will occur in 2008 and 2009.

Chief Michaels discussed funding and the budget results and the progress towards the second Master Controller Site with the board members. Sheryl Evans, Northrop Grumman, briefed the consortium members on the current status of the Interoperability Montana network and presented the group with updated maps representing the network. Chief Michaels stressed that inclusion of approved leases and continued attendance at the Interoperability Montana Technical Committee is the key to having new sites chosen.

The next meeting will be held Feb. 20 at 10:00 am, at the Law Enforcement Training Center, 440 Colorado Blvd., Glendive.

## Public Meetings on Communications Sites

By Scott Bradford [sbradford@mt.gov](mailto:sbradford@mt.gov)

The Dillon Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) held a public informational meeting to discuss a radio communications system project being proposed for implementation on BLM and Forest Service administered lands in Beaverhead and Madison counties. The meetings were held Jan. 22, and Jan 23 in Dillon and Lima. PSSB Communications Manager Scott Bradford attended the meeting in Dillon.

At the meeting, Beaverhead County discussed the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project. The IM Project is a state wide multi-agency project partnered to develop and implement an interoperable "trunked" communications system that will operate independently and provide advanced



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digital, secure voice and data communications for emergency response and public safety. Communications sites being proposed on public lands for development include Maurer Mountain, Ellis Peak, Antelope Peak, Sierra Mountain and Virginia City Hill.

For more information about the proposal, contact Angela Brown at the Dillon Field Office, 406-683-8045.

## Big Sky 11 Consortium Meeting

By Pete Mohan [pmohan@mt.gov](mailto:pmohan@mt.gov)

The Big Sky 11 Consortium met at the Billings Emergency Operations Center on Thursday, Jan. 24, at 10:00 am. Project Director Ed Auken reviewed the consortium minutes and presented a review of the last Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) meeting. Ed presented the group the latest map of the Northrop Grumman system design and with the projected budget for the Big Sky 11 sites and thanked Keith Lavender, Northrop Grumman representative for his diligence and perseverance in presenting the Interoperability Montana Budget in a spread sheet format.

Ray Hetherington, Wheatland County representative, briefed the group on Interoperability Montana Technical Committee results. Roger Smith, Montana Highway Patrol, told the group about progress on the microwave and trunking systems throughout the system and particularly as it pertains to Big Sky 11. Roger also briefed the group on the status of new sites that have been examined for the system.

A discussion of the second master controller and the technical requirements for the site was conducted by the group. Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County Commissioner stated that he requested the information presented to the group also be presented at the Montana Association of County Officials (MACO) in the future. The next meeting will be held Feb. 28, at 10:00 AM, at the Emergency Operations Center, 2305 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Billings.

## Upcoming Meetings

### January 28

IM Technical Committee Conference Call • 10:00 am  
Call-In Number: (877) 740-2201; ID: 2180796

### February 4

#### IMGC Finance Committee

Helena • 9:00 am – Noon  
Northrop Grumman Offices  
2401 Colonial Drive

#### IM Governance Committee

Helena • Noon – 5:00 pm  
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

### February 5

#### IM Project Directors Meeting

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm • State Capitol

### February 6

#### Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)

Great Falls • 10:00 am  
Wheat Building; 750 6th Street SW

### February 7

#### NTIC Northern Tier (NTIP) Technical/Board Combined

Mtg. • Havre, 9:00 am  
Great Northern Inn; 1345 1st St.

### February 13

#### South Central Montana Consortium (SCMIC)

Bozeman • 10:00 am  
Bozeman Emergency Operations Center  
219 East Tamarack

### February 19

#### Western Interoperability Consortium (WICC)

Missoula Co. Courthouse • 10:00 am

### February 20

Eastern Tier (ETIC) • Glendive • 10:00 am  
Law Enforcement Center, 440 Colorado Blvd.

### February 21

Big Sky 11 • Billings • 10:00 am  
Yellowstone County Fire Station, 2305 8th Ave N.

### February 21

#### I-15/90 Corridor Consortium

Butte • 10:00 am  
Chamber of Commerce Conference Room  
1000 George St.

### February 25

#### IM Technical Committee Face-to-Face Meeting

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm • State Capitol